

SCENOGRAPHY (Advanced Design Course-undergraduate)

Vandy Scoates

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Scenography is the craft of design a production as a whole instead of one area (scenery, costume, lighting, sound)

by itself. In this course the student will explore the theory and practice of designing scenery, costumes and lighting for performance; develop analytical and research skills to support the visual design; practice the application of relevant tools for communicating ideas visually; and become sensitive to the application and expressive use of design as an element of stage production.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the semester students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an increased sensitivity to performing and visual artistic representations of the Human experience
- Comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the meaning of the work and can discern principles
- Demonstrate collaboration skills and practices
- Display analytical Skills in regards to the qualities and historical context of the work
- Demonstrate oral communication skills through presentation
- Use Multi-media resources and skills to present work
- Express informed personal responses to artistic creations
- Compile factual and inspirational research for her/his design
- Create sketches, renderings, models, drafting, and presentations of her/his designs

TEXTS & MATERIALS:

REQUIRED TEXTS:

• *The Art of Theatrical Design* by Kaoime E. Malloy

• You will have various plays that you will read throughout the semester. These will be provided and/or can be found in the Library:

-*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey

- *The Pajama Game* Music and Lyrics by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross, Book by George

Abbott and Richard Bissell

-*Angels in America Part 1: The Millennium Approaches* by Tony Kushner

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Most of these materials can be found at your local art supply store or online.

- 11x14 or 9x12 Bristol Board • Tracing Paper • Architect Scale Ruler (Imperial)
- Pencil (HB or above) • Eraser • Cork Backed Metal Ruler
- Coloring Materials - Colored Pencils, Watercolor paint, Prisma-color pens, or other (Please clear with me)

RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:

- Exacto knife and blades • Tacky Glue • Mixed Media Paper • Geometry Set • Access to a computer during class • Sketch Pad
- A Flash drive with your last name written on it and with a minimum 32GB storage capacity.

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READINGS:

You will have readings each week from the text *The Art of Theatrical Design* as well as handouts posted on Blackboard. Readings are extremely important and will cover things we cannot get to in class. If I find that the class is not keeping up with the readings, pop quizzes will be given during each class period and those grades will factor into your class participation grade. There may also be recommended readings on the calendar. These are not required but may help you better comprehend the material.

In addition to the textbook, you will need to read three plays for the course: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *The Pajama Game* (musical), and *Angels in America Part One: The Millennium Approaches*. We will have discussions on these plays in class and if I find people are ill-prepared for the discussions, pop quizzes will be given on these plays as well. You will also be required to read the full play for the directing scenes you will be designing. Those will be chosen by week 5.

Production Response: worth 5% of Final Grade (Multiple option for due dates)

You are required to see two (2) productions this semester and write a response. These responses will exhibit a comprehension and understanding of the meaning of the plays, principles of the genre, as well as qualities and historical context of the work, and express informed personal responses to artistic creations.

You are required to see one production this semester and write a response. Please keep your program as a guide for your response and to turn in with your written work as a record of your attendance.

I would suggest writing your response (or at least take notes) shortly after seeing the show while it is still fresh in your mind. I am looking for a clear and concise 2-4 page paper, double spaced in 12pt. Garamond font. You will submit all responses on Blackboard. You have three (3) opportunities to turn in your response. All options are acceptable and are given equal weighting for your grade.

Please use the following guidelines when completing your reviews.

- A detailed description of the set, costume and lighting design using terms we learned in class. - A design rationale: Why do you think it was designed this way?
- Your opinion: Did the design help or hinder the piece and why?
- What moment or visual aspect of the design affected you the greatest and why?

You may see a costumed production outside of HPU (another college or theatre in the area) and write a response for extra credit.

PROJECTS:

Drawing Journal- 10% of Final Grade

You will use specific prompts from a list (found on a Blackboard) to create a drawing 1-2 times a week. You are required to do **a total of 20 drawings each worth .5% of your final grade**. There are 22 drawing due dates which means you may skip drawings two (2) times during the semester and still receive full credit for the assignment. You may draw up to 20 extra from the prompts provided for a total of 5% extra credit (each extra credit drawing worth .25%)

The drawings are due on specific dates throughout the semester (see calendar and prompt list for due dates). There are 22 dates you may turn in drawings and 45 total prompts. You may turn in both prompts on a due date but the second drawing will be considered extra credit and will not make up full credit for drawings missed in the past. As with most assignments, all drawings are due and must be posted by at 9:15am on the due date.

You may create drawings in any medium or on any surface you choose but all should be scanned or photographed and turned in on Blackboard. This means you need to make sure your medium is dark enough to read after a scan or you should alter the scan to be more visible online. If I am unable to see the details of your drawing because of scan quality, you will only receive half credit on that drawing.

Design Preferences

For your final project you will be designing costumes, sets or lights for two of the directing class scenes. **Please email me** your the design areas you would like to work ranking all three in order of your preference. I will try my best to give everyone their first choice but that may not be possible for all design teams. The final teams will be decided by Jay Putnam and myself and are NOT on a first come/first serve basis.

There is no grade for this portion of the project and you do not have to turn in a preference list if you do not want to.

Set Project A- Drafting Small Set Design: (5% of Final Grade)

You will draft out the theater and your set for *One Flea Spare*, on a piece of Velum in 1/2" Scale (Ground Plans for

Theater and Velum will be provided. The handout of furniture footprint sizes will be useful and can be found on Black Board. The Set Design:

You will create a design metaphor for the play (of which your design will be based) and, using blank printed ground plans and research, decide what your set design for *One Flea Spare* will look like. These original ground plans can be rough and are just working ways to hash out your design. Your design parameters are based on the following scenario:

- You have been invited to stage selected scenes from *One Flea Spare* as part of a play festival.
- You will have 10 minutes to get your scenery set up; therefore, you are limited to what you think you can successfully load in in five minutes (still, you are encouraged to be as ambitious you can be with those ten minutes).
- You may use backdrops and hanging pieces.

Questions to Consider:

- How will your metaphor and design elements impact the items you choose or create? - What physical elements are absolutely essential for this play to occur?
- How will the imagined exterior architecture of the house impact the interior space?
- How will the actors move around the space?
- Is it wide open? Is it cluttered? Are physical reasons for the actors to move anywhere? - What does your metaphor suggest? - What do things actually look like?
- How do your choices support the meaning of the piece?

Create your Ground Plan:

- Once you have decided on your set
- Lay out the paper's borders with construction lines.
- Lay out the paper's center line, labeled lightly for reference.
- Using your Printed ground plan, measure the placement of all items including your theatre space and transfer those measurements to the ground plan in 1/2" scale.

- Lay everything out in construction lines and Darken visible lines only when everything is placed, include legs, scenery and architecture.

- Use proper drafting techniques and correct furniture measurements

Scene Breakdown- 2% of Final Grade

You will create a scene breakdown, focusing on scene changes for *The Pajama Game*. This should can be done in spreadsheet or outline form but should be easy to read and understand. The information will be based on what is listed in the script as needs for the play but can include ideas you have about the set design if you choose. The following items must be included in the breakdown:

- Act/Scene - Page # (Libretto) - Song(s) - Location & TOD - Characters - Props - Scenery - Notes

You will also include an section, left blank for now, for scene shifts. This will be filled in for your Set Design

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project but does not have to be completed at this point. The notes section can be used for any information about sets, costumes, lights or sound that you think are important to the play or your set design.

Your grade will be based on completion and thoroughness of the breakdown.

Research Packet- 5% of Final Grade

You will put together a research packet for *Angels in America* that includes visual research for Costume, Sets and Lights and written dramaturgical research. The packet will be turn in as a digital document(Word,PDF,Powerpoint etc.).

I would suggest creating your visual research in a word or slideshow document and then putting it together with your dramaturgical research into one long PDF. All research should be readable, labeled and well organized. You may use all of this research for your lighting design project.

Visual Research:

- You will include inspirational, conceptual, and historical visual research and have a 25-60 images. -Historical research will make a majority of your images and that is okay.
- All images will be labeled with what the research is addressing and the mood it conveys

Dramaturgical Research:

- You will find three (3) articles that are dramaturgical in nature
- dramaturgical subjects can include: history of the play's production; a review of a particularly successful (or unsuccessful production); information on the playwright; interviews with play contributors or creators; or information about the geographical, cultural, sociological, medical, economic, or theological contents addressed in the play.
- 2 of the 3 articles must be from a non-web publication like a journal, book or magazine and none should be from a generalized reference website (like Wikipedia) who's sources may not be reputable or confirmable. These articles may be found online, but should be done through the library website to avoid non-reputable content.

Set Design Pajama Game: 10% Final Grade

You will design a set for *The Pajama Game* which will include the following items:

- A Design Metaphor (.5% of project grade)
- Research Packet with 10-30 inspirational, conceptual and historical images (historical making up the majority) that relate to your design. A color palette and props research must be included. (3% of Project grade)
- A script analysis of the musical using the template provided on Blackboard. (2% of Project grade)
- A completed scene breakdown which includes all scenery shifts. (.5% of Project grade)
- A Ground Plan of two(2) scenes from the show with different scenery setups These can be done on vellum or tracing paper so any stationary scenery and theatre architecture does not have to be re-drawn. You may do an additional scene for 2% extra credit on the project . (4% of Project grade)

Costume Project B: 2% of Final Grade

- Pick one character from *Angels in America*
- Pick a 3D object, animal or painting that you think speaks to the character and will serve as inspiration for the costume.
- Using a croqui (or Figure outline which can be found on Blackboard or you can find your own) or using your own drawn figure, render a Costume based on the object. If you do not have access to a printer, I would suggest trying to find a figure in a book, magazine or newspaper and tracing the outline. Worst case scenario you could bring an image up on your computer screen and trace from there.
- The rendering should be on 8.5"x11" paper (minimum) and in color
- Turn in your rendering along with a copy of your inspiration for the costume

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Costume Design One Flea Spare:

You will design a set for *One Flea Spare* which will include the following items:

- A Design Metaphor (.5% of project grade)
 - Research Packet with 15-35 inspirational, conceptual and historical images (historical making up the majority) that relate to your design. A color palette and makeup/hair research must be included. (3.5% of Project grade)
 - A completed scene breakdown which includes all costume notes and changes. (1% of Project grade)
 - Color renderings for four (4) characters in a medium of your choice. You may use a croqui (or Figure outline which can be found on Blackboard or you can find your own) or using your own drawn figure. If you do not have access to a printer, I would suggest trying to find a figure in a book, magazine or newspaper and tracing the outline.
- Worstcasescenariyoucouldbringanimageuponyourcomputerscreenandtracefromthere.Youmay do an additional rendering of the 5th for 1% extra credit on the project. (3% of Project grade)

Light Project C: 2% of Final Grade

- Format as illustrated by the sample synopsis (on Blackboard)
- Evaluation is based upon evidence of a close reading of the text and inclusion of detailed descriptions of the light in each look.

Lighting Design Angels in America: 8% Final Grade

You will design light for *Angels in America Part 1* which will include the following items:

- A Design Metaphor (.5% of project grade)
- Research Packet with 15-35 inspirational, conceptual and historical images (historical making up the majority) that relate to your design. A color palette and sound research must be included. (1% of Project grade)
- A completed scene breakdown which includes cue descriptions for lighting moments. (3.5 % of Project grade)
- An magic sheet with Front, Side (Left and Right), Black/Top and Specials that relate to the area breakdown and GP provided (On Blackboard). If you do not have access to a printer, you can put this into your photos on your phone or a PDF on your computer and annotate it. (3 % of Project Grade)

Final Designs for Directing Scenes: 12% of Final Grade Due 4/29 with performances on 4/22

You will create two (2) designs for two (2) different directors in the directing class. Design areas will be assigned around week 5. This project will be executed in two (2) ways: as a realized but minimal production seen on April 22nd (worth 5% of the grade) and as a non-realized, but fully designed version to be turned in on the April 29th (worth the other 15%).

The both portions will consist of meeting and working with the director to form a design in the area assigned (costumes, sets or lights). This will mean time inside and outside of class for collaboration with your director(s) and attending technical rehearsal for the performance.

For the Non-Realized portion of the assignment you will pick one of the two plays you were assigned and will do all portions of the assignment for that one play only. We will discuss this further in class, but in the meantime, make sure you pick which you would like to do, read the play, and start the process as if you are a contracted designer out of state. **You will have three (3) virtual meetings with your director prior to April 22nd via a method of your “teams” choosing (Skype, Slack call, WebEx etc...)** but you may not use chat only communication for your meetings. **There must at least be an audible component.**

Please reach out to you director (from the play you have chosen) and send me an email by Friday 3.27 explaining your meeting schedule and format.

Additional information will be given during class about what the realized portion can and cannot include but, the non-realized designs must have the following items according to areas and for each play:

All design areas:

- A Design Metaphor for the play (1% of project grade)

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-Research Packet with 20-40 inspirational, conceptual and historical images (historical making up the majority) that relate to your design. A color palette and props research (set), Hair/Makeup Research (costumes) and sound research (lights) must be included. (2% of Project grade)

- A script analysis of the play using the template provided on Blackboard. (1% of Project grade)

- A completed scene breakdown for the play using the criteria of the scene breakdown assignment. (1% of Project grade)

Set Design:

- One (1) ground plan of units sets for the play. You may do multi-scenery set-ups if you wish. (5% of Project grade)

Costume Design:

-A Minimum of two (2) color costume renderings for the play. You may do more if you choose. (5% of Project grade)

Lighting Design:

-Cue synopsis of the play with lighting descriptions. You will have a maximum of two (2) light cues per scene and do not have to have cue changes for every scene if it is not appropriate. (5% of Project grade)